

Board for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors

2001 Strategic Plan

March 7, 2001





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The California Legislature created the Board of Registration for Civil Engineers in 1929, following the failure of Saint Francis Dam in northern Los Angeles County which killed 450 people. The Legislature determined that the unregulated design of construction projects constituted a hazard to the public and thus required the licensing (registration) of civil engineers. The Board's jurisdiction over the licensing of land surveyors was enacted in 1933, when the State Surveyor General's office was abolished. The Board is now officially known as the "Board for Professional Engineer and Land Surveyors." There are currently 89,000 registered Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors in California.



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Executive Summary

The Board of Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors is a progressive Board, known for its dedication and commitment to action. The Board maintains its drive through the strategic planning process by laying out goals and objectives to carry out its Mission and Vision for the future.

The Board began the strategic planning process in February of 1994 during a two-day focus meeting with members of the Board, staff, and members of the public. The outcome of that meeting, and the meetings that followed, brought forth a strategic plan which included the Board's Mission and Vision statements, goals, objectives, and action plans to accomplish the objectives. Since that time, the Board has accomplished many of the goals and objectives it set forth and developed performance measures for its programs. The strategic plan was updated in early 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, and now in 2001 in accordance with the "Strategic Planning Guidelines" published by the Department of Finance. The Board will review and revise this document on a yearly basis to assure that it keeps pace with emerging trends, political climate, and natural disasters. For instance, resources and priorities were shifted due to the Sunset Review process and the Northridge earthquake.

This update contains goals and objectives for fiscal years 2001 through 2003. All budget change proposals for these years will be linked to the strategic plan. The strategic plan for this Board can be used by such offices as the Department of Consumer Affairs and the Office of the Attorney General in projecting their future workloads.

Mission Statement



The Mission of the Board for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors is to safeguard the life, health, property, and welfare of the public by regulating the practices of professional engineering and land surveying. The Board accomplishes its Mission by:

- ⇒ Licensing qualified individuals as professional engineers and land surveyors.
- ⇒ Anticipating changes in the engineering and land surveying professions to ensure that the laws and regulations are contemporary, relevant, and responsive.
- ⇒ Establishing regulations and promoting professional conduct.
- ⇒ Enforcing laws and regulations.
- ⇒ Providing information so that the public can make informed decisions regarding utilizing professional engineering and land surveying services.

Vision Statement

The Board for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors will have a major role in ensuring that Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors provide the highest quality professional services.

- ⇒ Consumers and licensees will have access to comprehensive information through a wide range of technology and facilities.
- ⇒ California Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors will possess the knowledge, skills, and abilities enabling them to meet the expectations of clients and consumers.
- ⇒ The public will have a high degree of confidence in the engineering and land surveying of roads, bridges, buildings, other facilities and systems.



Goals

The goals of the Board for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors will be the framework through which specific objectives are enunciated. The goals are to:

- ⇒ Protect consumers by:
 - ◆ providing information and education about the practice of engineering and land surveying, and their relevance to California consumers;
 - ◆ effectively discouraging violations of the law before they happen; and
 - ◆ promptly investigating and adjudicating law violations.
- ⇒ Promote laws and regulations that are clear, relevant, unambiguous and functional.
- ⇒ Increase public and professional awareness of the Board's:
 - ◆ Mission
 - ◆ Vision
 - ◆ Activities to protect the health, welfare, and safety of the public.
 - ◆ Services to both consumers and licensees.
- ⇒ Ensure adequate fiscal and human resources are available to maintain an effective operational structure so that the Board can meet its Mission and Vision.

Board Description



The Board consists of thirteen members: seven public members, one licensed land surveyor, and five licensed engineers. The Governor appoints eleven of the board members; six professional members and five public members. One public member is appointed by the Speaker of the Assembly and one public member is appointed by the Senate Rules Committee. The Governor appoints professional members so that one is licensed to practice engineering as a civil engineer, one as a mechanical engineer, one as a structural engineer, and one is a member of one of the remaining branches of engineering. One of the professional members shall be from a local public agency, and one shall be from a state agency. All members are appointed to four-year terms limited to two consecutive terms. Each member can serve a one-year “grace” period at the end of his or her appointed term. There are currently five vacancies on the Board.

The composition of the Board beginning the 2001/2002 fiscal year will change significantly with the tenure end of three Board members. This will leave the Board with eight members and five vacancies for appointment. A new mix of members may provide additional opportunities for strategic planning in the future.

The Board is charged with safeguarding the life, health, property, and the welfare of the public by regulating the practice of professional engineering and professional land surveying. The work performed by engineers and land surveyors is highly technical, requiring specialized knowledge, examination, and experience.

The Board fulfills its mandate by:

- ⇒ Establishing qualifications
- ⇒ Administering examinations
- ⇒ Providing information
- ⇒ Investigating complaints
- ⇒ Enforcing laws against practitioners who pose a threat to the public



Customers and Stakeholders

Defining the customer of any regulated service is critical to evaluating the need for regulation. The Board's customers and stakeholders include the following:

<u>Customers/Stakeholders</u>	<u>Customer/Stakeholder Needs</u>
Individuals:	
Public	Protection of health, safety, and welfare; information; and recourse
Clients- procurers of services	Access to licensed practitioners; information; enforcement of laws and regulations; and recourse
Licensees	Administration of licensure, information, and enforcement of laws and regulations
Applicants	Fair examinations, access to licensure, and Information
Students	Information
Organizations who interact with the Board on a significant basis include:	
Legislature	Protection of the public interest and effective administration of program.
Executive Branch	Protection of the public interest and effective administration of program.
DCA	Protection of the public interest and effective administration of program.
State and Local Public Agencies	Information, support, and outreach
Consumer Groups	Information, support, and outreach
Professional Associations	Information, support, and outreach
Student Associations	Information, support, and outreach
NCEES (National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying)	Support, participation, and information
California Colleges and Universities	Information, collaboration, and participation in ABET reviews
Out-of-state Boards	Coordination and information

Values



The Board for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors will strive for the highest possible quality throughout all of its programs, making it an outstanding and effective regulatory organization.

The Board values:

- ⇒ Interaction with customers (both individuals and organizations) that is professional and customer focused.
- ⇒ A proactive regulatory role.
- ⇒ A progressive and effective operation.

Guiding Principles

In conducting business, the Board assures that:

- ⇒ Board processing of qualified applicants is timely.
- ⇒ Disputes between consumers and licensees are investigated promptly and impartially.
- ⇒ Staff is highly competent and contributes to the integral success of the Board.
- ⇒ Information is available to all through a high profile, comprehensive outreach program.
- ⇒ Violations of the law are discouraged before they happen and are investigated and adjudicated promptly when committed.
- ⇒ Operations are managed strategically, performance is measured against defined standards, and programs and policies are evaluated in light of emerging trends, practices and technologies.
- ⇒ Legislative changes are approached proactively.



Goals and Objectives

Goal

Protect consumers by:

- ♦ providing information and education;
- ♦ effectively discouraging violations of the law before they happen; and
- ♦ promptly investigating and adjudicating law violations.

Objectives

- ⇒ Reduce backlog of enforcement cases to meet performance measures.
- ⇒ Evaluate cycle times and performance measures for enforcement cases and make recommendations for appropriate cycle times and performance measures. Implement procedures that will ensure that operations do not violate appropriate cycle times and performance measures for future cases.
- ⇒ Finalize proposed Technical Inspector Program and implement pilot.
- ⇒ Develop and begin implementation of a proactive plan to expand enforcement outreach.
- ⇒ Enhance the Board's website by ensuring information is relevant and up-to-date; expand functionality available to licensees and consumers through the web site.



Goal

Promote laws and regulations that are clear, relevant, unambiguous and functional.

Objectives

- ⇒ Implement changes from the 2000 Legislative cycle.
 - ◆ SB 2030—Requires the Board to transition the state developed Structural Engineer and the Land Surveyor examinations to NCEES national examinations.
 - ◆ Develop, adopt, and implement regulations to establish LSIT qualifications.
 - ◆ Develop, adopt, and implement regulations to establish a Code of Professional Conduct.
 - ◆ Review Title Act Study results performed under direction of DCA
- ⇒ Evaluate the Professional Engineers' Act, the Licensed Land Surveyors' Act, and the Board Rules and request regulatory and/or legislative changes where appropriate.
 - ◆ Adopt regulations addressing the EIT waiver.
 - ◆ Adopt regulations to allow five-years credit for an ABET Masters Degree.

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- ◆ Make recommendations in report format and develop action plan for change.

Goal

Increase public and professional awareness of the Board's:

- ◆ Mission
- ◆ Vision
- ◆ Activities to protect the health, welfare, and safety of the public.
- ◆ Services to both consumers and licensees.

Objective

- ⇒ Establish a public awareness campaign for consumers/public, professional, and applicant outreach.

Goal

Ensure adequate fiscal and human resources are available to maintain an effective operational structure so that the Board can meet its Mission and Vision.

Objectives

- ⇒ Support implementation of Sunset Review recommendations for a fee restructure.
- ⇒ Evaluate business processes and staffing functions to ensure effective use of human resources and equipment.

Appendix



Environmental Scan

Following is a list of current issues that are affecting the Board as well as engineering and land surveying disciplines in California.

Internal to the Board

- ◆ Significant changes in Board membership
- ◆ Sunset review
- ◆ Budget and fund issues because of current fee structure
- ◆ The Structural Engineer and the Land Surveyor examinations are in transition to the national examinations
- ◆ Backlog of enforcement cases due in part to external processing timelines through Attorney General and Office of Administrative Hearing offices
- ◆ Diversity of engineering licensure disciplines, emerging disciplines, review of Title Act licensure
- ◆ Emerging technology is changing the engineering discipline
- ◆ Decline in graduates in the licensed discipline populations
- ◆ Passing rates on examinations are an issue other than anticipated
- ◆ Issues with California examination development

Department, Agency, and State Government

- ◆ The Board has an improved relationship with the Department
- ◆ The Governor's eGovernment Initiative
- ◆ Need for integrated systems for licensing and enforcement
- ◆ Privacy issues especially for Internet consumers
- ◆ Appointment of new Board members
- ◆ Sunset Review
- ◆ Unreasonable expectations by the Board, considering current resources and funding



Statewide

- ◆ Engineering training and practice is moving into areas not regulated by the Board such as computer engineering and related technologies
- ◆ Increased specialization within the regulated disciplines
- ◆ State specific definitions of regulated disciplines do not always coincide with other states' definitions and/or licensing structures
- ◆ Expansion of the industrial, utilities, and contracting exemptions
- ◆ Changes to design/build concepts has altered the traditional roles and responsibilities of the practitioner
- ◆ Building codes are changing
- ◆ New materials are increasingly being used
- ◆ Current energy crisis
- ◆ Increase in national and international practice
- ◆ Declining population of graduates in the licensed disciplines with an increased demand for practitioners in these disciplines to address infrastructure upgrades (highways, schools, hospitals, etc.)
- ◆ Increased demand for licensed land surveyors and insufficient number of licensed land surveyors or Civil Engineers authorized to practice land surveying
- ◆ Only two schools in California offer a Bachelor's Degree in land surveying
- ◆ Unlicensed activity
- ◆ Declining passing rates on examinations in California
- ◆ Low Pass rate of California engineers relative to other states
- ◆ Potential for a large earthquake to strike in California which will increase demand for licensed engineers and land surveyors
- ◆ Need for consumer education because of consumer confusion as to when a licensed engineer or land surveyor is needed



- ◆ Accessibility to Board services and information
- ◆ Continuing professional development
- ◆ Need for licensee education of laws and regulations
- ◆ Less mentoring of graduate engineers and licensed engineers
- ◆ Less motivation to become licensed
- ◆ Expectations for eGovernment

National

- ◆ California has not adopted NCEES model laws
- ◆ Mobility of engineering and land surveying population nationally and internationally
- ◆ Support is growing for national licensure
- ◆ Comity is difficult for land surveyors coming into California
- ◆ Engineering and land surveying graduates have a lack of knowledge of the licensing process
- ◆ Differing standards for ABET accredited and non-ABET accredited schools
- ◆ New engineering disciplines at a national level are not recognized by California law, thus created administrative and licensing problems for these individuals and potentially causing a risk to the health, safety and welfare of the public.